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POLAND: Efforts To Combat Unrest



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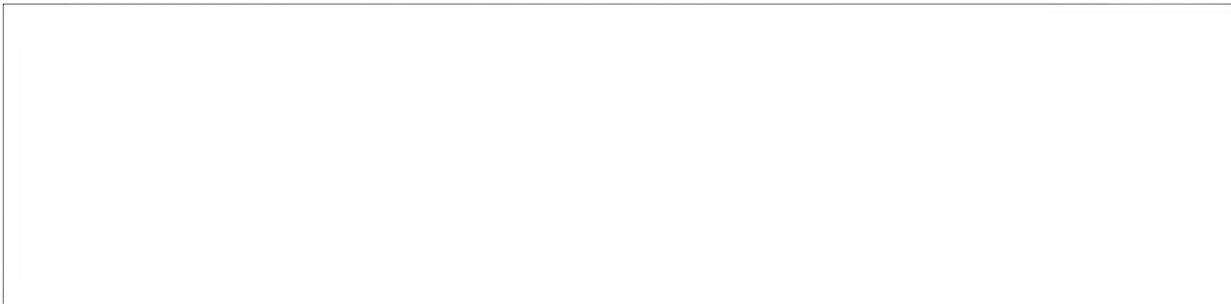
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Martial Law Restrictions

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10 The government is sending mixed signals regarding an easing of martial law restrictions. Since late last week it has allowed International Red Cross representatives to visit and talk privately with some internees and has permitted the reopening of foreign libraries and cultural centers sponsored by Western governments. A US diplomat traveling in southern Poland, however, recently was stopped four times by police and once was held at gunpoint while his car was searched.

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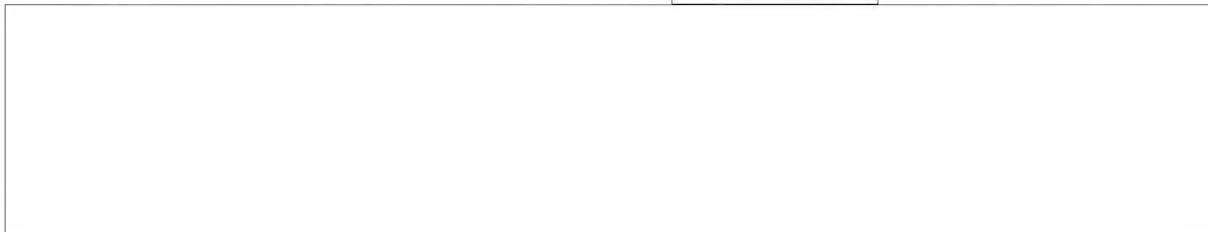
8 Comment: The regime is trying to give the impression, particularly for the benefit of some West Europeans, that it is easing restrictions significantly. Nevertheless, the diplomat's experience indicates continuing
9 *10* *11* insecurity by the government and suggests that it may be tightening controls in some areas.

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Reactions to Jaruzelski's Speech

Y TASS yesterday quoted Jaruzelski's address to the parliament at length, including his carefully hedged suggestion that martial law might be lifted at the end of February. The Soviets paid particular attention to the Premier's criticism of Western "interference" and sanctions and took note of his veiled threat that Poland would withdraw from the CSCE review session in Madrid if it encounters criticism there.

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Comment: The TASS commentary indicates that the Soviets approve the tone of Jaruzelski's remarks. It nonetheless may be significant that TASS the same day carried excerpts from an interview with Politburo member Olszowski, voicing hardline sentiments. The interview could be intended as a signal to Jaruzelski that if he fails to pursue satisfactory policies, there are others waiting in the wings who would be more willing to do so.

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Meat Exports

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The government reportedly has resumed exports of meat products from at least one plant as a result of increased pork production and procurement.

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Comment: Warsaw suspended meat exports last month in an effort to increase domestic supplies. The resumption of the exports--if it becomes widely known--will cause considerable resentment among Polish consumers who face reduced meat rations in January and February and a 22-percent reduction in meat supplies this year.

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SYRIA-LEBANON: Renewed Bilateral Contacts

Lebanese Foreign Minister Butrus's visit to Damascus last weekend and the earlier cancellation of a scheduled meeting of the Arab Conciliation Committee on Lebanon suggest that Syria is abandoning the joint Arab effort to promote a reconciliation in Lebanon and is returning to bilateral negotiations to protect its interests.

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Butrus's trip followed a visit to Beirut earlier last week by Syrian Foreign Minister Khaddam. The renewed contacts between Syrian and Lebanese officials come at a time when Syria's talks with the Christian Phalange Party, its main rival in Lebanon, reportedly also have been expanded.

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Lebanese authorities maintain that the renewed emphasis on contacts with the Syrians is intended to supplement rather than replace the efforts of the Conciliation Committee. Damascus, however, has already indicated that it will not allow the Committee to be a conduit for progress on reconciliation until after the Lebanese presidential election this summer.

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The Syrians have long viewed the Committee as a stalking horse for a Saudi-Phalange-US plan to reduce their influence in Lebanon before the election. Since last September, they have used their Lebanese Muslim allies to stall the Committee's efforts.

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Comment: Syria's interest in expanded talks with both the Lebanese Government and the Phalange suggests that Damascus, like the Phalange, is trying to preserve maximum maneuvering room during the election campaign.

Earlier this week, Phalange party chief Pierre Jumayyil offered to turn responsibility for security in Phalange-controlled East Beirut over to the government. Although little is likely to come of this offer, the Phalange will use it as a gesture of good faith toward Lebanese Muslims.

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